

Town of Adams Massachusetts 01220-2087

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

**TOWN HALL BUILDING
8 PARK STREET**

Wednesday, January 20, 2021, 7:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER: On the above date the Board of Selectmen held a Zoom meeting. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Board of Selectmen Chairman Hoyt. Present via video were Chairman Hoyt, Vice Chairman Blanchard, Member Duval, Town Administrator Green, Town Counsel St. John III, Police Chief Kelley, Detective Cunningham, Donna Cesan, Town Clerk Meczywor, DPW Director Tober, Northern Berkshire Community Television, Scott Stafford from Berkshire Eagle, Jack Guerino of iBerkshires, Casey O'Donnell of EforAll, and Administrative Assistant Dunlap. Attending via telephone was Member Nowak.

Chairman Hoyt advised that "pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 *Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18*, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Town of Adams Board of Selectmen is being conducted via remote participation. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order. A recording of this meeting is available for anyone who wishes. Rule of 10 in place according to Code Enforcement for the size of the room in accordance with the Governor's order.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The December 16, 2020 and January 6, 2021 minutes were submitted for approval. ***Motion made by Member Blanchard to waive reading and to approve meeting minutes for December 16, 2020 and January 6, 2021 as submitted, second by Member Duval. Roll Call Vote: Chairman Hoyt, Vice Chairman Blanchard, Members Duval and Nowak. Motion passed.***

PUBLIC CALL-IN:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/92570085343?pwd=M2hsQzFvaFZaRGRjK21nTlNwMFljdz09>

Meeting ID: 925 7008 5343; ***Passcode:*** 630174; ***One tap mobile:***

+19294362866,,92570085343#,,, *630174# US (New York);

+13017158592,,92570085343#,,, *630174# US (Washington D.C)

Dial In: 1 (929) 436-2866; ***Meeting ID:*** 925 7008 5343; ***Passcode:*** 630174

Public Comment: *There were no comments made at this meeting.*

OLD BUSINESS

Renewal of Motel License, Mt. Royal Inn, 99 Howland Ave, Adams, MA. **Chairman Hoyt** advised that all paperwork has been received.

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TOWN CLERK
ADAMS MASS.

Motion made by Vice Chairman Blanchard to take the Renewal of Motel License for Mt. Royal Inn at 99 Howland Ave, Adams, MA off the table, second by Member Duval. Roll Call Vote: Chairman Hoyt, Vice Chairman Blanchard, Members Duval and Nowak. Motion passed. Motion made by Vice Chairman Blanchard to approve the motel license for Mt. Royal Inn upon completion of inspections, second by Member Duval. Roll Call Vote: Chairman Hoyt, Vice Chairman Blanchard, Members Duval and Nowak. Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

EforAll presentation. Casey O'Donnell, Program Manager for EforAll introduced the Berkshire County Team was introduced. He explained that EforAll stands for "Entrepreneurship for All", with a mission to help entrepreneurs at the inception stage. He described a recent community engaged event and a one-year free business accelerator training program with cash awards for participants. He noted that the model allows up to fifteen businesses into the program and matches them with mentors. He reported there are up to \$20,000 in prizes to give away and the next program will be offered on January 26th. He highlighted the businesses successfully launched over the last year and reviewed the application period ending on January 28th at noon. He explained that the Digital Business Survival Course brings existing businesses online and is provided by digital experts and outlined the new EforAll HQ Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) program. Those interested are invited to contact www.Eforall.org or email Berkshire-county@eforall.org. Board Members requested the business think of Adams if they are looking for space and brief discussion took place about the potential of an incubation-type site for entrepreneurs that completed the course with empty storefronts to receive lower rent and rent building or storefront space for the full price later on. It was noted that pop-up shops for businesses weren't able to come to fruition due to the current Covid status but as restrictions loosen it will be possible to have community interaction. It was stated that doing business in the future may be different and having a support system for new businesses to be trained in advanced ways to run a business is a positive thing. It was explained that the programs are entirely virtual right now for creating, innovating and supporting entrepreneurs.

Town Census Information: Town Clerk Haley Meczywor advised that the 2021 Town Census is underway and should be in mailboxes. She noted the importance of sending it back right away to help the Town keep track of the residential count. She emphasized that even if there are no changes citizens are requested to still return it. Forms may be dropped off at Town Hall via the drop box out front, mail it in or call office and give the information over the phone. She advised that typically she gets back around 60% and is hoping for 75% back this year. She explained that the dog license application was included with the census for convenience and it can be returned together with the census and the Town will mail back the dog tags. Applications will require a current, updated rabies certificate to be included. It was clarified that for unreturned forms a list of who hasn't returned them will be run and an attempt made to make sure residents are still living there utilizing landlords and the Code Enforcement Officer in some cases. Problems with the Federal Census were noted.

Introduction of Police Chief Scott Kelley: Town Administrator Green welcomed Chief Kelley to the Town of Adams and advised he was sworn in yesterday at Town Hall. Chief Kelley reported that the transition is going well and he has felt very welcomed. He noted that Adams Police Department is a great department and he anticipates they will do great things for the community. Board Members welcomed him and look forward to working with him on the Public Safety Sub-Committee.

Introduction of Detective Travis Cunningham: *Town Administrator Green* introduced Detective Travis Cunningham and gave his background, training and mentoring. He was thanked for taking on the assignment which is so important to the Department. Detective Cunningham thanked the Board for the opportunity and noted he felt privileged to be part of the support group. He advised he appreciated the help and support of his position. Board Members welcomed Detective Cunningham and thanked Detective Wandrei for his service in the position. It was explained that patrolman skills don't transfer over but the position supports officers that find crimes that are too in-depth or time-oriented. It was explained that the position requires the availability to delve into matters uninterrupted and to be an asset to the group in a support role. *Chief Kelley* advised it takes a different thought process to gather evidence and go in a different direction toward the end result. He noted that Detective Cunningham has the drive to be a great investigator. It was pointed out that public safety makes a great community, and higher crime statistics less desirable.

Appointment of Safety Committee Member: *Police Chief Scott Kelley. Chairman Hoyt* advised with transition this appointment is going from Chief Bacon to Chief Kelley. It was identified that the Safety Committee is an internal group comprised of Department Heads with larger workforces with safety exposures and is used if needed to look at workplace injuries or create a new process or procedure. *Motion made by Vice Chairman Blanchard to approve the appointment of Chief Scott Kelley as a Safety Committee Member, second by Member Duval. Roll Call Vote: Chairman Hoyt, Vice Chairman Blanchard, Members Duval and Nowak. Motion passed.*

Appointment of Traffic Commission Member: *Police Chief Scott Kelley. Motion by Vice Chairman Blanchard to appoint Chief Scott Kelley to the Traffic Commission, second by Member Duval. Roll Call: Chairman Hoyt, Vice Chairman Blanchard, Members Duval and Nowak. Motion passed.*

Northern Berkshire Solid Waste District Contract: *Chairman Hoyt* advised she thought the Town would be moving forward with a presentation on the contract but Director Tober was prepared with the recycling dividends program which was not the same item. This topic will be tabled until more preparation is done to present it. It was noted that the contract is for five years and it cannot be changed. It will just be reviewed and open discussion about how the transfer station is doing financially and whether or not to raise the fee. The data will go before the Board for review. It was pointed out that the rates for pickup will be more than working with TAM and discussion is needed on how to make the transfer station viable. *Motion made by Vice Chairman Blanchard to table the Northern Berkshire Solid Waste District Contract topic, second by Member Duval. Roll Call Vote: Chairman Hoyt, Vice Chairman Blanchard, Members Duval and Nowak. Motion passed.*

Disposition of 20 East Street: *Town Administrator Green* reviewed that the Board discussed 20 East Street last summer regarding the future of the building, which was put out for bid. He noted there are some solid inquiries about some of the buildings in town and an RFP must be done before disposing of the building. He requested the Board make the determination that 20 East Street is available for disposition to solicit development interest to get it back on the tax rolls as a tax generating property. *Donna Cesan* advised the Town is ready to issue an RFP within a week or two and this is an important step, which was last done 2017 and merits being done again for the procurement process. It was noted that the property is approximately five acres. Parameters of the RFP were reviewed as well as the criteria that includes multi-family housing and parameters approved under the 40R program. *Motion made by Vice Chairman Blanchard to declare 20 East Street property as excess property and available for sale, second by Member Duval. Roll Call Vote: Chairman Hoyt, Vice Chairman Blanchard, Members Duval and Nowak. Motion passed.*

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Town Administrator: *Town Administrator Green* advised he has been focused on the health pandemic. He noted that Thursday, Adams was reported as still being in the red and epidemiology showed a variety of different infection sources. He advised that the best tools to fight Covid-19 are to wear face coverings, practice social distance and wash hands. He reported that the CDC and the National Institute for Health made recommendations and passed them down to the fifty states. Adams is following the Department of Public Health (DPH) guidelines to the municipality's Board of Health and Regional Board of Health. Vaccinations are in Phase 1, which has opened up to dentists and home health care providers. Massachusetts is breaking down the population by occupation and age to vaccinate faster in a more controlled manner. He noted that vaccinations are slightly ahead as the state is in the latter half of Phase 1 and will be slightly ahead by the end of January. He pointed out that the Walgreens has been nationally authorized to issue vaccines which has opened it up to other eligible groups and if the state receives more vaccine there will be more venues to receive them. He advised the information will be updated and available on the Mass DPH website and the local Board of Health will have the same information. As information becomes available the Town Facebook page, public announcements and the local media will have the information. He noted he participated in two vaccination clinics for first responders and three vaccination stations have opened to provide 300 vaccinations. It was outlined that on the Town website there is a Covid-19 information tab with a link with a phone number for information regarding vaccines. Dr. Rhoads from the Board of Health and Town Administrator Green were thanked for the information and volunteering to provide logistical skills to organize the vaccinations of the first responders. It was pointed out that Walgreens pharmacy in town may be able to provide the vaccinations but those receiving them must wait fifteen minutes in case of a reaction and with the Memorial School building across the street it may be a possibility for people to wait there after receiving the vaccine so more may be provided. It was suggested that having a drive-through vaccination clinic at the Agricultural Fairgrounds could be possible as long as there are logistics for the 15-minute waiting period and those willing to administer the vaccinations are found. Town Administrator Green was asked to stay in touch with the State Representatives and Senator on this until everyone is vaccinated.

Town Counsel: *Town Counsel St. John III* advised that he received a response from Mr. Higgins, the complainant, and the Attorney General's Office concerning Higgins' Open Meeting Law complaint made against the Board of Selectmen. He noted that Mr. Higgins was satisfied with the Town's response and withdrew his complaint. He outlined that Mr. Higgins had complained that the meetings posted for December 8 and December 9 were illegal because the police chief interviews were left with a "TBD" designation. He noted that the December 8, 2020 meeting was cancelled because there were no interviews and the agenda for the December 9, 2020 meeting was amended to name the persons being interviewed for the position. Based on the amendment, the notice was adequately posted. He advised that he provided advice to Town staff concerning a request by a property owner to waive the fee for and the registration of his property as abandoned pursuant to Town bylaws. He advised he discussed the hearing concerning the Dupee appeal of this Board's orders regarding the Dupees' dog with the District Court Clerk, and due to the current Covid-19 orders made by the Chief Judge, the hearing, which was scheduled for today, would be postponed to April 30th. He advised he notified all witnesses of the continuance. He noted he advised staff concerning an issue regarding a potential Open Meeting Law violation regarding one of the Town boards and he determined it was not a violation but just a concern that was raised that did not rise to that level. The continuance of the Dupee hearing was briefly discussed and it was explained that the witnesses were still willing to testify. The process legalities were outlined.

SUBCOMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS: *Member Duval* advised that the Budget Subcommittee should have a meeting to discuss the process this year and identify possible budget hearing dates. It was explained that the Town is expecting the Free Cash number to be certified and will be getting some revenue data before looking at the process.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GOOD OF THE ORDER: *Member Nowak* reported receiving calls about plowing with cars on side of road and advised that citizens need to be careful if leaving a windrow because it freezes and it could wreck a plow frame or the skirting of a plow. *Chairman Hoyt* reported that there will be a Workshop next Wednesday at 6:00 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

#6. To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body;

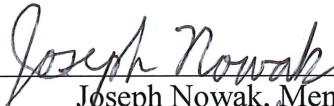
a) 26 Commercial Street, Adams

At 8:30 p.m. Motion made by Vice Chairman Blanchard to enter into Executive Session for reason of #6, second by Member Duval. Roll Call Vote: Chairman Hoyt, Vice Chairman Blanchard, Members Duval and Nowak. Motion passed.

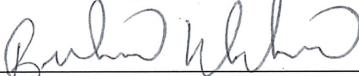
At 8:53 p.m. Motion made by Vice Chairman Blanchard to exit Executive Session, second by Member Duval. Roll Call: Chairman Hoyt, Vice Chairman Blanchard, Members Duval and Nowak. Motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT: *Motion made by Member Blanchard to adjourn the meeting, second by Member Duval. Roll Call Vote: Chairman Hoyt, Vice Chairman Blanchard, Members Duval and Nowak. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.*

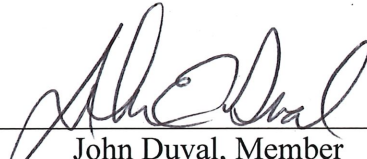
Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,
Recording Secretary




Joseph Nowak, Member



Richard Blanchard, Vice Chair



John Duval, Member



Christine Hoyt, Chairman